11. Partnerships

Discusses partnering with GPO, the types of partnerships, who can form a partnership with GPO, benefits of partnering with GPO, and general partnership requirements. It also describes collaboration among Federal depository libraries and state plans.

What's New and Important

The most important additions are

- Developing partnerships with GPO
- Increased emphasis on collaboration among depositories

Partnering with GPO

The increasing shift toward a more electronic environment has resulted in a new role for depository libraries: that of partnering with GPO to increase permanent public access to electronic materials. These partnerships can benefit each depository library, the depository community, and GPO by offering services to help librarians navigate the electronic environment or providing server space to help store electronic materials. Partnerships can develop along various lines, with varying degrees of formality, and at various points in the information life cycle.

Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) partnerships are official agreements between GPO and one or more parties that may include government, corporate, educational, and other institutions in joint projects that benefit the FDLP.

While FDLP partnerships will vary based on the type of project, to date partnerships have fallen into three categories. However, partnerships are not limited to these categories, and GPO will consider partnership proposals that fall outside of these categories.

Content Partnerships

Content partner institutions host part of the FDLP Electronic Collection for free use by the public. Agencies and depository libraries enter into GPO-brokered

agreements to provide the environment and resources for permanent access to agency products not previously managed via GPO Access.

In general, a content partnership requires that an institution or organization provide storage capacity and cooperate with the agency and GPO in providing user access to the product or products. GPO acts as broker of the agreement and agrees to receive custody of data and software in the event that the partner institution withdraws from the arrangement. Other provisions may be negotiated into individual agreements.

When considering a content partnership, remember that the core of legislative and regulatory information managed on GPO's servers will remain with GPO permanently, while partner institutions will provide storage capacity and free public access to a wide variety of executive and judicial information.

Service Partnerships

Service partners offer services that assist GPO and depository libraries with the administration of FDLP collections.

In service partnerships, depository libraries develop services that enhance the use of FDLP government information. After determining that a service developed for depository operations or administration has a broad appeal and utility, GPO enters into an understanding with the creating library to offer the service across the FDLP. Examples of service partnerships include Documents Data Miner which provides collection management tools for Federal depository libraries, and Browse Topics which provides a subject-oriented search approach to Federal agency documents.

Hybrid Partnerships

Hybrid partnerships are a mixture of content and service partnerships, for example, hosting part of the Electronic Collection and also offering a service important to the administration of the FDLP collection. An example of a hybrid partnership is the Clemson University Pilot Light Project to facilitate the migration of tangible publications distribution to electronic (EL) dissemination for Federal depository libraries while also assessing the operational and service implications of a regional Federal depository library with a primarily electronic collection.

Who Can Form a Partnership?

Institutions that have a project or a resource that would benefit the depository community as whole may be eligible to form a partnership with GPO. Partner institutions may include individual depository libraries, library consortia, or other institutions, such as Federal agencies. Look at the partnerships listed at
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/partners/index.html
for ideas on possible partnership agreements with GPO.

There are variables to weigh in deciding if the library wants to become an official partner. The library may have paid for proprietary software and cannot promise that software to GPO if the project ceases. The library might wish to maintain total control over content and not be subject to GPO in matters of performance or alterations to the project. The library might have an idea that will mix depository content with other kinds of materials.

If your institution has an idea for a digital or other project, first be sure that you are not repeating another institution's work.
- Post your idea to GOVDOC-L and ask for comments from your depository librarian colleagues.
- Do a thorough search of the Web.
- Check the Registry of U.S. Government Publication Digitization Projects (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/legacy/registry/).

Then ask yourself these questions:
- Do you have an ongoing program in your library that could be shared with other depository libraries?
- Does your library have a digitization effort?
- Does your staff have time to devote to a special program?
- Would your library administration support your participation in a nationwide effort?
- Would participation on a national level such as this help to justify your continuing as a depository library to your director?
- Do you have a realistic idea as to the financial and technical resources necessary to maintain the partnership?

Benefits of Partnering with GPO
Benefits to participating in a partnership include:
- Making a contribution to the depository community.
- Strengthening GPO's outreach and collection use by contributing additional staff time, expertise, and server space.
- National recognition of your institution as a leader in the depository community.
- Demonstration to your administration of the value of your collection and justification for your continued participation in the depository program.
- Professional growth through innovative use of online resources.
- Answer a need of the general public by creating a resource and linking from GPO's national pages.
- Committing a library to a project that is not subject to participation by specific individuals. The partnership may help to ensure the project's continuation should a staff member be promoted, retire, or otherwise leave an institution.
- Involvement in a project that has direct impact upon citizens' access and use of government information.

General Partnership Requirements

Partnerships share the common element of being formalized through an agreement between GPO and the library or agency. The following points from GPO are important considerations for partnership arrangements:

1. Access
The purpose of the partnership is to provide the public with unrestricted, no-fee access to specific Federal Government information products and services.

2. Memorandum of Understanding
A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the participating library and GPO will formalize the partnership. The formal agreement will require GPO to agree to receive custody of data and software in the event that the partner can no longer support permanent public access. The MOU should also include wording concerning software and server requirements for the participating library, specific duties required of the library staff, and other requirements.

3. Official source
Partner sites may be able to indicate that the site is an official source for the product content. In the case of partnership agreements that include the originating agency, the MOU may specify that the site be recognized as an official source.

4. No restrictions on reuse
It is critical to include a stipulation in the MOU that the partner will impose no restrictions on redissemination that might impede the public's ability to use the information.

5. Locators and bibliographic control
GPO will provide pointers and bibliographic access to in-scope products held by the partner.

6. Ownership
The MOU must recognize that the content of the information products in the collection is in the public domain, and that a copy of any software developed as an integral part of the collection must accompany the content if the product is transferred back to GPO. However, the MOU should recognize that the partner retains the intellectual property rights associated with any value-added software the partner develops for the project.

An important Web page to consult for copyright considerations in any digital project involving government publications is *Frequently Asked Questions About Copyright* (http://cendi.dtic.mil/publications/04-8copyright.html) maintained by CENDI

8. Reports and Performance measures
The MOU should specify performance measures for the number of simultaneous users and the percentage of time that the service must be available.   This may take the form of a regular report to GPO on statistics or status of the partnership.

9. Security
The MOU must address system security issues such as providing adequate backup procedures and firewalls.

10. Consultation with GPO
It is critical in any partnership to keep the lines of communication open. The MOU should provide for regular consultation between the partners on a number of issues pertaining to the electronic products such as utilization rates, operational details, or any significant alterations in the way in which the collection is organized or accessed. Remember that any significant changes made to the project appearance or function must be approved by GPO.

11. Publicizing the partnership
Both GPO and the partner will promote the partnership.

More Information
For more information on establishing partnerships, contact the Office of Planning and Development, Library Services (lpplanning@gpo.gov).

For those depositories unable to enter into a formal partnership with GPO, there are other opportunities to work with GPO to improve the FDLP by assisting with special projects. Recent examples of such projects include
- Testing GPO's new OPAC
- Participating in the drafting on the new *Federal Depository Library Handbook*
- Evaluation of the *GPO Access* disaster recovery site

Collaboration Among Depositories
The FDLP functions best as a system of cooperating libraries. No single depository can meet all potential community needs. Frequent communication among neighboring depositories is encouraged. Depository collection development, promotional activities, and continuing education activities should be accomplished in conjunction with neighboring depositories.

GPO encourages depositories to collaborate on projects such as digitization, retrospective cataloging, and storage of tangible collections. A variety of depositories have pursed projects that enhance the FDLP. Here are a few of those efforts
- Five Colleges of Ohio: The Five Colleges Documents group (Denison, Kenyon, Oberlin, Ohio Wesleyan, and Wooster) have worked together to

provide current and retrospective cataloging of U.S. Government publications.
- Government Information Online (GIO): Over 30 depositories participated in this pilot project to establish a model for virtual reference for government information. (http://govtinfo.org/ParticipantList.htm)
- Providing copies of Web sites and handouts to the GODORT Handout Exchange. (http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/godort.html)

There are many innovative projects underway in the depository library community. GPO's Registry of U.S. Government Publication Digitization Projects (http://www.gpoaccess.gov/legacy/registry/) is a good place to start a search for digitization projects. If your library is unable to take on a project, consider contacting a depository running a project and offering to contribute. The opportunity for contributions is unlimited.

State Plans

The effectiveness of the FDLP depends on close cooperation between selective Federal depositories and their regional Federal depository. To assist in coordinating and developing this cooperation, GPO encourages each state to draft a state plan.

At its 1981 spring meeting, the Depository Library Council passed a recommendation that "the Public Printer investigate the feasibility of requiring each state to prepare a plan to coordinate the Federal documents depository program within that state."[1] The plan was to be developed through consultation with all designated Federal depository libraries within the state and address all depository responsibilities.

In response to this recommendation, the Public Printer and the GPO stated that these plans have "genuine merit" and that they are "encouraging depositories in states . . . to undertake them". A state plan provides "statewide guidelines for cooperative collection development, disposition, promotion, and other services for depository libraries."[2]

On August 17, 2001, Francis J. Buckley, then Superintendent of Documents sent a letter to all depository library directors and depository coordinators. This letter asked the depository library directors to support and assist in the revision of the state plans. He stated that "among the benefits of the State Plan process is the opportunity to strengthen the relationship among all of the depositories in the state or service area, to coordinate with other library and information planning initiatives, and ultimately to provide improved, cost-

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[1] Depository Library Council. "Recommendations and Responses April 13-15, 1981," (Washington, D.C.: FDLP Desktop, revised 2000), http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/rsp81.html (accessed Feb. 28, 2006).
[2] Ibid.

effect library services to the citizens." [3] Two enclosures were sent with the letter. One of them gave *Background Information (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/sdltr8-17-01.html#a)* on the state plan effort and the other provided *State Plan Resources (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/sdltr8-17-01.html#b).*

 State plans should be used to:

- Develop a comprehensive government publications collection in the state.
- Assist in cooperative collection development by providing a framework for determining what is acquired by whom.
- Facilitate interlibrary loan between depositories especially for rarely used items.
- Foster accurate referrals.
- Provide depository staff with knowledge of the resources of neighboring depositories.
- Address the implications of substituting electronic-only versions of depository publications still available for selection in a tangible format.

An individual library's collection is only one part of a much larger information bank. Cooperation, communication, and coordination among the custodians of government information are essential to the efficiency and effectiveness of the FDLP.

Each library should take into account the strengths and weaknesses in retrospective materials as well as for current items of other nearby depositories, and incorporate this information into its collection development policy. The collection of a public library depository close to a university library that has been a depository since 1895 will be quite different from that of one in an isolated small town.

Depositories are encouraged to be aware of neighboring collections and to actively coordinate item number selection to provide the best coverage of government information for their Congressional district. Such cooperative arrangements should be delineated in the collection development policy. Many states have also developed a written state plan for government publications that can provide overall guidance on collection development issues. Copies of existing state plans are available from either GPO or your regional library.

Many states have already created state plans and have made them available online. For example, in 2004 Michigan revised its state plan

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[3] Francis J. Buckley Jr., Washington, D.C. to Federal depository library directors, August 17, 2001. http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/mgt/sdltr8-17-01.html

(http://www.michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17449_18637_18649-109592--,00.html), and Texas (http://zavala.tsl.state.tx.us/ref/fedinfo/stateplan.html) created a new one. They may provide useful background on some of the issues currently being discussed by GPO and depository libraries. Additional plans are linked from the Library of Michigan's Regional Federal depository library Web site (http://web.mel.org/fdlp/plans.html).

A program conducted Stephen Henson and Paula Kaczmarek at the 7th Annual Federal Depository Library Conference, entitled "How to Draft a State Plan" (http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/proceedings/98pro2.html) will provide additional information for those just beginning the developing of a state plan.

✦ Tips, Practical Advice, and Lessons Learned

Partnering with GPO
1. Business proposal
Before approaching GPO with a proposal, experience with partnerships has shown that the best first step is to create a formal business proposal. This proposal should include information on why your library can make a difference in the electronic government information environment and why you can be an effective partner. Include a realistic "game plan" that includes your vision of financial responsibility, staff time involved, server space, and any financial or other gain for your parent institution or community and GPO. Make sure the mission statement of the partnership is clear.

2. Approval of library administration
Remember that a partnership with GPO will require approval from your library or parent institution's administration. Make sure that you have obtained this approval before you contact GPO and begin negotiations.

3. Server space and systems support
Approval may also be contingent upon your systems department indicating that server space is available to house the partnership and that staff is available for technical support.

4. MOU timeframe
To form a partnership, the participating library and GPO will have to sign a MOU. Remember that your library administration and parent institution's legal counsel will probably require time to examine the MOU before approval. GPO must also have the MOU reviewed by legal counsel. Several months should be allowed to send the documents back and forth before both parties approve it.

5. Network with other partnership institutions
If you are interested if forming a partnership, contact other institutions that have ongoing partnerships with GPO to get advice on such things as amount of

time required to formulate the MOU, staff time required, server space required, available grants to support the program, and anything else you might not have considered. For a list of current partnerships see http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/partners/index.html.

6. Partnership site design
Your partnership site may be designed or redesigned by GPO to coordinate with the rest of GPO's Web pages. GPO will need to map your partnership site appropriately from its site, so that users will be able to easily locate your partnership's material.

7. Site maintenance
In a service partnership, most of the maintenance for the partnership site will be up to the partnering institution, and not GPO. If you wish to make changes to the characteristics of the service, you will need to get approval from GPO. You will be required to give up some control as to the editorial service that you provide.

8. More information
If you are interested in becoming an FDLP partner, or if you have an idea for a new partnership project, contact the Office of Planning and Development, Library Services (lpplanning@gpo.gov).

State Plans

- Each state is unique so there is no right or wrong way to develop a state plan. The number of regionals and selectives in each state will influence the way the state plan is created and organized. For example, California has one regional and 90 selectives while New Mexico has two regionals and nine selectives. Some states, such as South Carolina, have shared regionals, while other regionals are responsible for more than one state.

- If you are developing a state plan for the first time, review the plans of other states to find out if there is one that you could use as a guide.

- Include state documents groups, such as a state chapter of GODORT in the state plan process.

- The regional librarian or librarians need to take an active role in creating or revising a state plan. They should serve as the coordinator for the process, can be chair of the committee, can ask interested persons to volunteer, can appoint committee members, can serve in an advisory capacity, etc.

- Writing a state plan is an opportunity to involve the depository library directors in the state and to further educate them about the FDLP and GPO. For example, the director of the regional depository at the University of

Georgia hosted a daylong seminar in Athens for depository library directors and depository coordinators. The director also invited a staff member from the FDLP to participate in the seminar and give the keynote address. This seminar provided the directors an opportunity to ask questions and learn more about GPO and the FDLP from a GPO official.

- The state plan process gives the depository coordinators a chance to promote the FDLP to the depository library director and to other library staff members.

- When the state plan has been completed, it needs to be approved by the depository library directors and the depository coordinators in the state. An approval process and procedure should be included in state plan.

- Even the most carefully written state plan will need to be revised. The timetable for doing so should appear in the text of the plan. The revision process should also provide an opportunity for the depository libraries to review general library policy in regards to its U.S. Government publications collection.

- The state plan should be placed on a Web site so that it is easily available.

Important for Library Administrators

Partnering with GPO
If your staff is considering a partnership with GPO, the library's or parent institution's administration must give specific approval. You may be asked to write a letter on behalf of your depository indicating that you are aware of the staff and financial commitments involved and the benefit that this collaboration would have for your library and library community. You will be consulting with your depository coordinator during all phases of planning. An effective business plan will be required and will demonstrate the support and understanding for the partnership by the library administration.

State Plans
The state plan provides guidance and procedures concerning the FDLP that are specific to the state. The state plan is an agreement between the regional depository library's administration, GPO, and the selectives in the state. Selective housing agreements or collection development agreements between or among depositories can also be incorporated into the state plan.